

IN THE CLAIMS:

1.-10. (cancelled)

11. (new) A drive assembly for a driveline of a motor vehicle with an axle which is selectively drivable, the assembly comprising:

a drive with a drive housing comprising a sleeve-shaped projection in which a drive input shaft is rotatably supported; and

a multi-plate coupling arranged ahead of the drive, the multi-plate coupling being rotatably supported in a coupling housing connected to the drive housing and, further comprising a coupling input part for introducing torque and a coupling output part connected to the drive input shaft in a rotationally fast way,

wherein the multi-plate coupling is arranged coaxially externally relative to the sleeve-shaped projection and at least partially axially overlaps said sleeve-shaped projection.

12. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 11, the multi-plate coupling comprises a set of coupling plates for the transmission of torque and which, axially alternately, are connected to the coupling input part and to the coupling output part in a rotationally fast way, wherein the set of coupling plates at least partially axially overlaps the sleeve-shaped projection.

13. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 12, wherein the multi-plate coupling comprises a carrier firmly connected to the coupling input part and a hub firmly connected to the coupling output part, wherein outer plates of the set of coupling plates are connected in a rotationally fast way to the carrier and inner plates of the set of coupling plates are connected to the hub.

14. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 11, wherein the drive input shaft is supported by two axially spaced rolling contact bearings in the sleeve-

shaped projection of the drive housing, wherein the multi-plate coupling axially overlaps at least one of the rolling contact bearings.

15. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 12, wherein the drive input shaft is supported by two axially spaced rolling contact bearings in the sleeve-shaped projection of the drive housing, wherein the multi-plate coupling axially overlaps at least one of the rolling contact bearings.

16. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 11, wherein the coupling input part comprises a hollow shaft whose inner diameter is greater than the outer diameter of the drive input shaft, wherein the hollow shaft is arranged coaxially relative to the drive input shaft and partially axially overlaps same.

17. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 11, wherein the coupling output part of the multi-plate coupling comprises a sleeve which, via a toothing, is connected in a rotationally fast way to the drive input shaft and is axially secured by a securing ring against an inner bearing race of a rolling contact bearing at an end of the coupling.

18. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 16, wherein the coupling output part of the multi-plate coupling comprises a sleeve which, via a toothing, is connected in a rotationally fast way to the drive input shaft and is axially secured by a securing ring against an inner bearing race of a rolling contact bearing at an end of the coupling.

19. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 14, wherein the coupling output part of the multi-plate coupling comprises a sleeve which, via a toothing, is connected in a rotationally fast way to the drive input shaft and is axially secured by a securing ring against an inner bearing race of the rolling contact bearing at an end of the coupling.

20. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 16, wherein the hollow shaft is rotatably supported by a first bearing in the coupling housing and by a second bearing on the coupling output part.

21. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 16, wherein the set of coupling plates is supported against a supporting disc connected to a hub and can be loaded by a pressure disc, wherein a setting device is provided for actuating the multi-plate coupling by loading the pressure disc.

22. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 21, wherein the setting device comprises a ball ramp assembly which having two opposed discs with ball grooves whose pitch extends circumferentially in opposite directions, and balls held in the ball grooves, wherein one of the discs is positioned in the coupling housing in a rotationally fast way and the other disc is rotatably drivable via an electric motor and at least indirectly loads the pressure disc.

23. (new) A drive assembly according to claim 22, wherein the drivable disc is radially centered by the balls relative to the disc arranged in the coupling housing.